



DISTRICT 9 PLAN

Adopted by Saint Paul Planning Commission 2-8-80
Adopted by Saint Paul City Council 3-13-80



SUMMARY

PREMISE

In August, 1977, an ad hoc group of West Seventh residents and the city began meeting to develop a plan for the West Seventh neighborhood. This plan was initiated by the West Seventh Street Federation as the community organization. The plan discusses issues concerning the area, and attempts to refine strategies to deal with those issues into a five year work program.

MAIN POINTS

West Seventh is an area of small pocket neighborhoods bisected by a major commercial and traffic artery. A high percentage of the land is industrial. The land is either bedrock or peat, which makes construction difficult. All areas need some housing improvements. The residential areas are adversely affected by pollution from industry and heavy traffic. The neighborhood is particularly concerned about the proposed steam plant at the Kaplan site.

The people of West Seventh are predominantly white, many still keeping their ethnic heritage alive. Home ownership is strong in the western neighborhoods, less so in the east. The population is dropping and becoming slightly older and poorer. The population of West Seventh cannot support as many services, such as schools and businesses, as it once did. As a result, the West Seventh Street business strip is turning to regional and citywide markets.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Gear new construction to increasing housing, public, or commercial services, or employment opportunities for West Seventh residents, but do so without disrupting existing residential development.

2. Build Pleasant Avenue corridor as a parkway with bike and pedestrian paths.

3. Redevelop the Chestnut-Eagle area as a housing/commercial area oriented to the riverfront.

4. Improve Shepard Road for truck traffic; realign it along the bluff and build a parkway along the river.

5. West Seventh should not be widened in the Seven Corners area.

6. Build apartments on vacant land, and housing for seniors along West Seventh between St. Clair and the Civic Center.

7. Coordinate public improvements with investment by home owners as well as businesses located in the two main target areas.

8. Landscape around the tank farms and other industries.

9. Consider pocket parks for each sub-neighborhood as cooperative ventures between the neighborhood and the city.

10. MTC should consider a light rail line on West Seventh, as well as build more bus shelters on West Seventh, initiate routes to West Seventh employment centers, and improve service after 6:30 p.m.

11. Obtain a permanent location for the West Seventh community center.

12. Promote better relations between merchants and community, including fine-tuning merchandising to meet the needs of the local market and job training and placement with area businesses.

13. Strongly encourage compliance with the Fort Road design study guidelines.

14. Industrial structures built in the river valley should not rise higher than the cliff where residential areas begin, and should not block views to sites across the river or into the valley from residential areas.

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INTRODUCTION

This plan was initiated by the West Seventh Street Federation in its role as a community organization. The City of St. Paul provided a planner to act as consultant with the community. Meetings were begun in August 1977, with West Seventh residents and boards of organizations.

This plan was adopted by the West Seventh community at a Federation caucus meeting on June 14, 1978, and was presented to the city for its adoption as part of the Comprehensive Plan for St. Paul.

Each section outlines issues concerning West Seventh and recommendations or strategies to resolve those issues.

The planning committee hopes that this preliminary draft can be the basis for lively discussion within the West Seventh community concerning our goals and directions.

DISTRICT 9 BOUNDARIES

During the course of the planning committee work, neighborhoods near Kipp's Glen and on lower Lexington and Irvine Avenue wished to participate in the District 9 Plan. Residents of these areas are proposing a boundary change to include their neighborhoods in District 9. This plan incorporates those areas in its discussions.

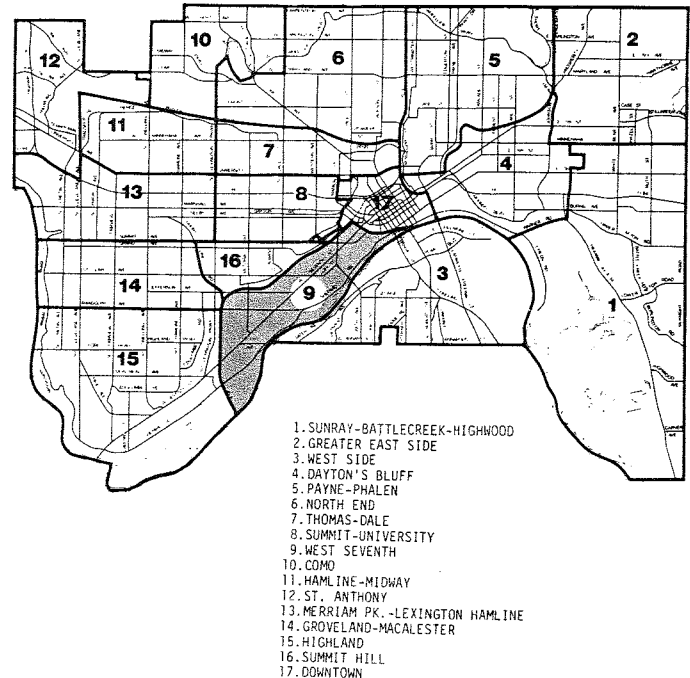
Recommendation

Residents of this area and the West Seventh Federation should pursue a boundary change with District 15 following citizen participation procedures.

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENT ON DISTRICT 9 BOUNDARY CHANGES

The lower Lexington Avenue and Kipp's Glen neighborhoods are presently in District 15. Residents of these neighborhoods participated in the District 9 Plan and the plan recommends on page 1 that they go through the established boundary change process to become part of District 9. While the Planning Commission supports recommendations 1, 3 and 4 for lower Lexington Avenue and the three recommendations for Kipp's Glen, the Planning Commission wishes to note that these areas have not yet sought inclusion in District 9. The Commission has no position on the recommendation to change the district boundaries, but recommends that the appropriate boundary change process be used to resolve this issue.

Figure A District Location Map



HISTORY OF WEST SEVENTH

by Dave Bredemus and Gary Brueggmann

Pierre "Pig's Eye" Parrant, a colorful Canadian bootlegger, was expelled from Fort Snelling in 1838 for selling whiskey. In the middle of today's West Seventh Street neighborhood, Parrant staked the first formal claim to land in what is now St. Paul.

This first settlement didn't last long, however, for the Fort Snelling commander burned down the cabins. But very quickly a new settlement was reintroduced. Soon, by 1842 a warehouse and small business shacks sprang up around this "Upper Landing".

In 1843 John Irvine purchased 300 acres of land for \$300. Irvine opened up a saw mill and cleared much of the area for later settlement. By the 1850s the eastern part of West Seventh Street--or Upper Town as it was then referred to--developed into St. Paul's finest residential district. Centering around John Irvine's mansion and the park square which he donated to the city in 1849, this once fashionable neighborhood has more pre-Civil War houses than any other neighborhood in the city. In 1973 Irvine Park became St. Paul's first entry on the National Register of Historic Sites. A block from the park, Governor Ramsey's mansion built in the early 1870s is also a National Historic Site.

The steam boat landing, along with the development of an overland road from Fort Snelling to Jackson Street served as an impetus for neighborhood growth. Soon a commercial district was to be seen in the neighborhood.

By the 1870s immigrants from Germany, Ireland, Poland, Bohemia and later Italy were swarming into St. Paul. These groups settled extensively in the West Seventh Street neighborhood. There were by 1920, five distinct ethnic groups concentrated in the area of less than three miles. Yet all evidence on the subject seems to show little or no conflict or antagonism between any of the groups. Up until World War II crime in the West Seventh Street area was extremely low.

West Seventh Street today has many of the customs and values that these early immigrants brought to America, and we would like to see this quality of life retained through astute planning.



POPULATION

The West Seventh area has a population estimate for 1975 of approximately 11,582 persons. The population is predominantly white, and the median income in 1970 was below \$10,000. The population is probably still below the median income for the city.

West Seventh has dropped in population from a high near 14,000 persons in 1970. There is a citywide pattern of out-migration of middle aged families with children. The families in West Seventh are growing older. However, the area is now beginning to attract young couples with small children.

West Seventh has a strong base of family groupings. However, 13% of these families are headed by only one parent. These families usually need greater assistance from the community.

Another problem is that only 27% of the households in West Seventh had children under 18 in 1970. With so few households with children, the chance to maintain neighborhood schools and facilities will diminish.

COMMUNITY DECLINE

The major factors affecting the West Seventh community are population and land.

Problems

1. The population is declining, making it too small to support essential community services necessary to make West Seventh an attractive place to live. West Seventh has lost 2,500 persons in the past five years.

2. The population is becoming poorer. Population changes have left behind more older people and poorer people in the community. The incomes of these people alone cannot support services within the community.

3. The land in West Seventh (bedrock or peat) is not conducive to economical residential opportunities. Without residential construction, the area will continue to lose population and services. However, there are many sites in the district where new construction could occur without disrupting the existing residential fabric.

In the past five years the area has lost grocery stores, drug stores, schools and other neighborhood related services. It is possible even the junior high school will be closed. With the loss of these institutions or services, the identity and cohesiveness of the neighborhood is also lost.

Goals

West Seventh population must be stabilized at a size large enough to support community level services and institutions (12,000 to 16,000 persons).

The area now lacks interest to families raising children. This group should be the major focus for efforts to encourage people to remain or move to the West Seventh area. Increased housing costs elsewhere are causing people to consider West Seventh Street's relatively inexpensive housing.

This first goal shows the relatedness of all other aspects of this plan. People will not locate where there are no services; services will not locate where there are no people. The land use, housing and services sections of this plan will suggest strategies to improve people's interest in living and working in the West Seventh community.



PHYSICAL PLAN

LAND PROBLEMS

The West Seventh area is a product of its geography. The area is a table land along the river. At one time the river flowed at this level, eventually cascading in a great falls. The remnant of that fall is the slope downtown between Wabasha and Cedar Streets. The water scraped the table land clean of all glacial deposits. Eventually the river dug even deeper into its present channel. West Seventh was left between the floodplain and the deep glacial soils above it along Summit Avenue.

Soils

The prevalence of bedrock or peat deposits near the surface has made home construction in West Seventh \$5,000 to \$6,000 more expensive than other sites in St. Paul. However, high demand for housing has made this land valuable for high rise developments.

Goal

To overcome the soils limitations to quality development in the West Seventh area.

Recommendation

The city should capitalize on present high demand for housing by encouraging development of problem sites in the West Seventh area.

Neighborhood Decline and Isolation

The major land use problems have been caused by: (1) the bisection of the land by transportation arteries; (2) the encroachment of industrial and institutional uses into residential areas; (3) the acquisition of right-of-way for major roads; and (4) the movement of downtown related land uses westward.

The geography of West Seventh has resulted in several small neighborhoods separated from each other. The advantage of this is the opportunity to create many clearly defined neighborhoods. Smaller residential areas have the possibility of a strong identity among their residents.

Goals

Maintain existing residential communities.

Improve the commercial and community services needed to enhance residential life in the West Seventh area.

Provide housing for all West Seventh residents.



LAND USE STRATEGY

Because of its built-up nature, very little dramatic change is foreseen in the community, except on vacant property not now used for housing.

Recommendations

1. Existing land uses should remain essentially the same over the next five years (see Figure B).

2. Areas closest to downtown should have some increased density with new apartment residential construction.

3. Some mix of different kinds of housing and commercial is healthy for all areas of West Seventh.

4. Industrial uses should be restricted to existing zoned sites.

5. Open space areas (parks and nature areas) along the river should be expanded.

6. New construction should be geared to increasing housing, public or commercial services, or employment opportunities for West Seventh residents.

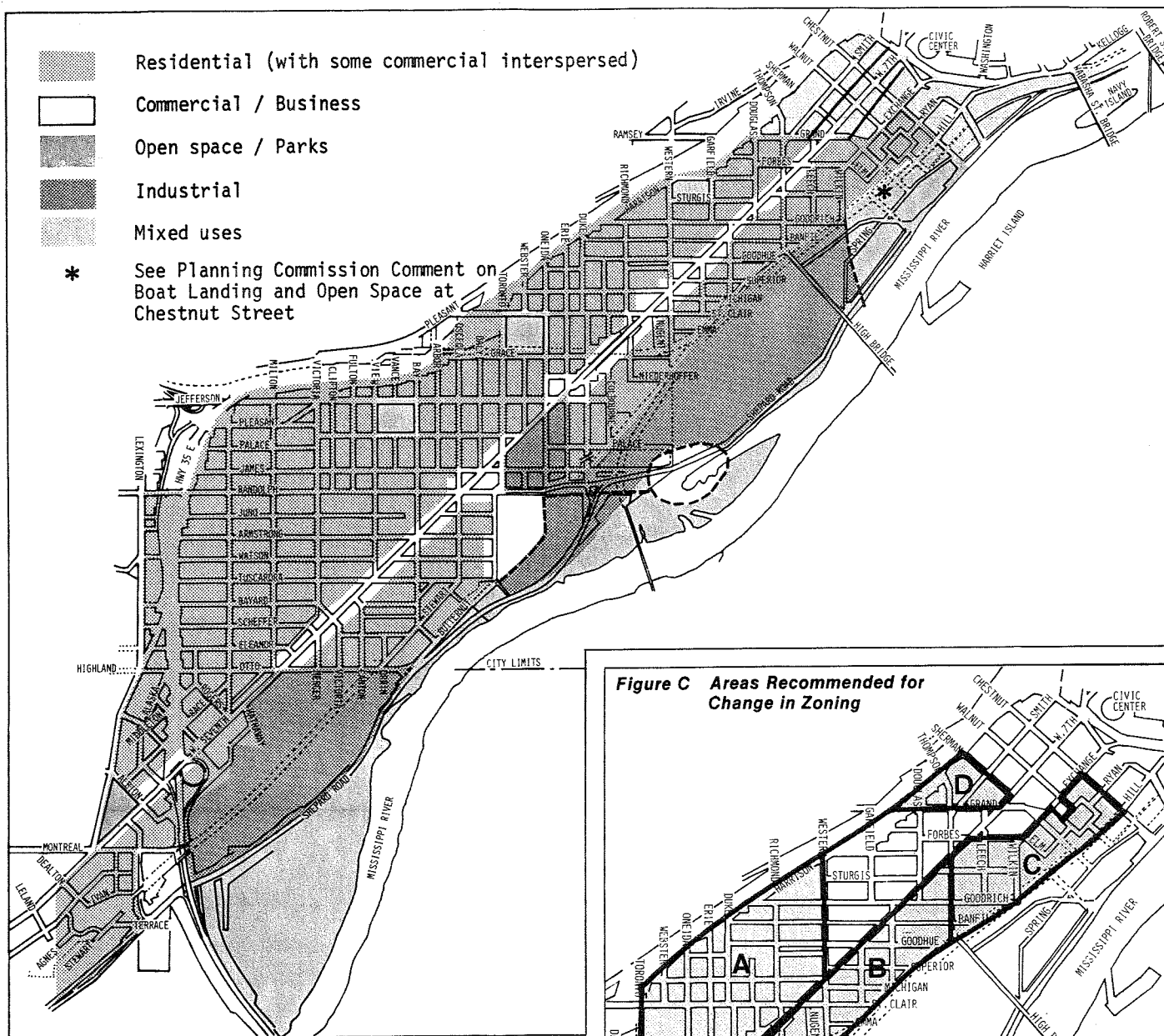
7. In many cases, special sites should be developed for higher residential densities (see Neighborhood Section).

8. Commercial should be encouraged along West Seventh and on Randolph east of West Seventh. Residential areas should be protected from encroachment by incompatible commercial or industrial uses. Appropriate buffers should be developed where problems exist.

9. Figure B shows the proposed land use for West Seventh Street.

10. The city should take advantage of the high housing demand and West Seventh's vacant land to add housing opportunities in the district.

Figure B Proposed Land Use



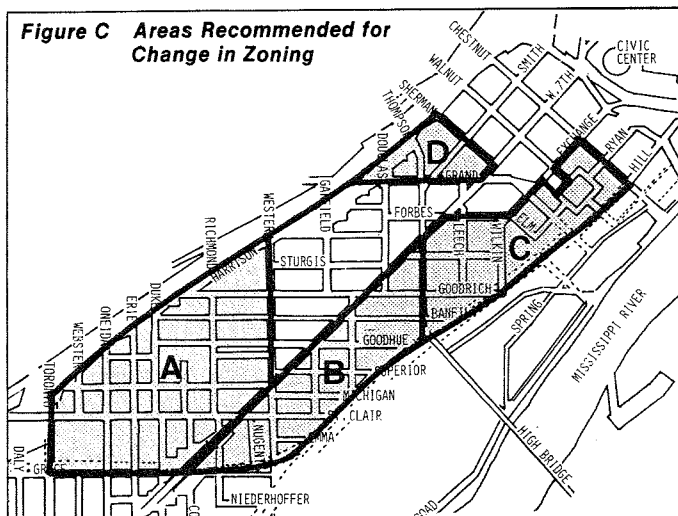
Zoning

Figure C shows areas recommended for changes in zoning. These changes will not require removal of structures now existing in the areas, but will bring the zoning descriptions into line with present and forecast uses of the areas.

Recommendation

The City Planning Commission initiate a 40 Acre Study to rezone the West Seventh area according to the classifications in Figure C.

Figure C Areas Recommended for Change in Zoning



Areas where zoning should be changed to match existing densities.

- A** St. Stans area - change from RT-2 to RT-1
- B** Lauer Cliff area - change from RM-2 and RT-2 to RT-2
- C** Leech/McBoal & Irvine Park - change from RM-3 and RM-2 to RM-1
- D** Western Hospital area - change from B-3 to B-5



HOUSING

Home ownership is strong in the West Seventh area. In those areas nearest downtown, only 23% of the housing units were owner occupied, while the areas west of Victoria had over 70% of the housing owner occupied.

Long time residents are a sign of neighborhood pride and concern. Fifty-seven percent of West Seventh residents have lived in the same unit of housing for more than six years. (City average is 53%.) However, too high a percentage of long term residents may mean a lack of income or opportunities to move when they want to.

To attract more persons to West Seventh and to encourage a mixture of incomes to increase the market power of West Seventh Street, more quantity and varieties of housing are needed.

A major concern to area residents has been the desire to increase housing opportunities without destroying existing housing or radically changing existing neighborhoods. Housing issues are discussed under Housing Needs, Housing Conditions and the Residential Environment.

Housing Needs

Problems

1. More apartment and four-plex housing is needed for seniors who don't want to keep up a yard or large house as well as for other people in West Seventh who don't wish to live in houses.

2. Housing at market rates are needed to attract more middle income people to West Seventh.

3. West Seventh has a large number of low and moderate income households who need housing.

4. All West Seventh residents can use better home financing opportunities.

Goal

To provide a variety of housing opportunities for West Seventh residents.

Recommendations

1. Apartments should be constructed on vacant land near Randolph, Osceola and Drake Streets; near United Hospitals or along Chestnut Street. Apartment developers/owners should be encouraged to maintain mixes of market rate housing.

2. The oil tank farm sites should be carefully studied as possible sites for new housing development.

3. Housing for the elderly should be available along West Seventh between St. Clair and the Civic Center. An ideal location would be land near United Hospitals or along Chestnut Street south of West Seventh.

4. As more apartments are built some mechanism such as cooperatives or condominiums should be considered to insure a high percentage of owner occupancy of new units.

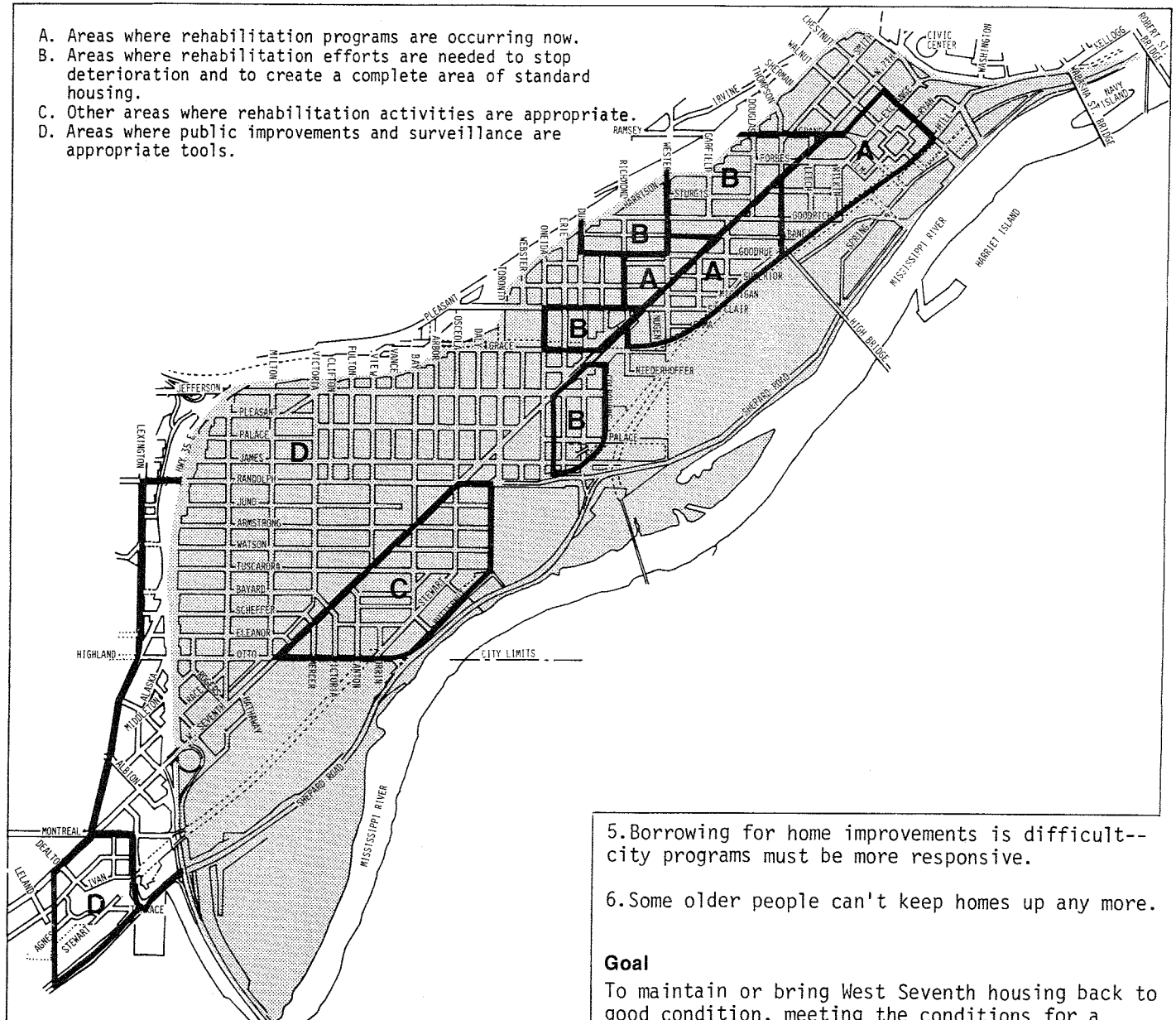
5. West Seventh should establish a housing mortgage program similar to the commercial Local Development Corporation.

6. West Seventh must attract young families to live in the community by starting a neighborhood promotion program.

7. The West Seventh community should work with area bankers to encourage more loan activity in West Seventh.



Figure D Housing Rehabilitation Priorities



Housing Conditions Problems

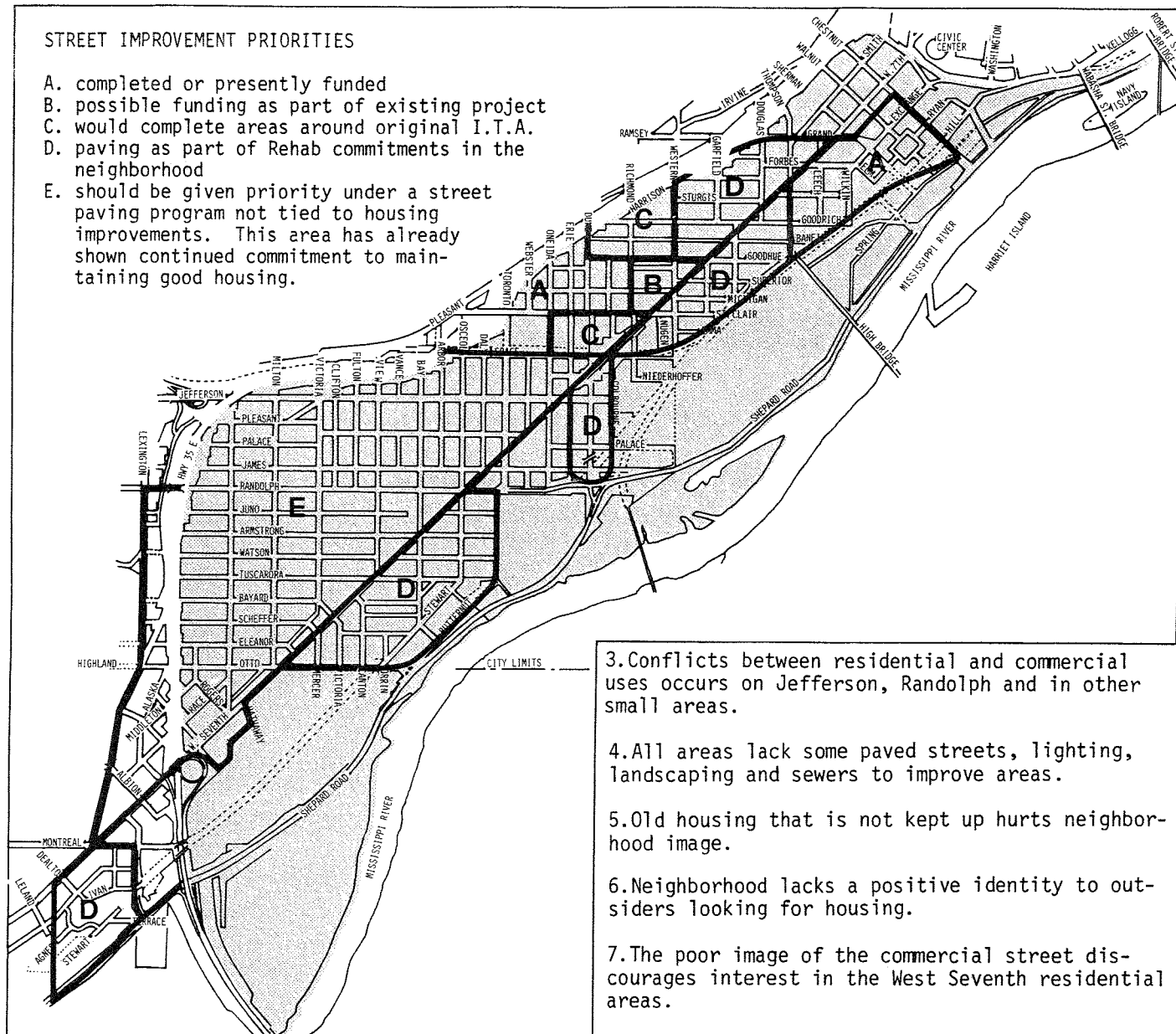
1. Old housing needs improvements; the age of structures increases the need for maintenance.
2. Rented houses show lack of maintenance.
3. Uncertainty of redevelopment makes people unwilling to fix up their homes.
4. Speculators sit on property but won't maintain it.

Recommendations

1. Housing conditions are addressed in the sections on West Seventh neighborhoods. Generally, all West Seventh areas need some housing improvements. Strategies for housing improvement should be initiated by neighborhood residents in accord with the city's Residential Improvement Strategy.
2. Neighborhood concentrated improvement programs should proceed according to the attached map of priority areas (see Figure D).



Figure E Street Improvement Priorities



Residential Environment

Besides the individual condition of each house, a neighborhood is greatly affected by the environment around it.

Problems

1. Vacant houses, buildings and property lower housing values around them.
2. Large apartment complexes break up neighborhoods.

Goal

To improve the image and environment of West Seventh residential areas.

Recommendations

1. The neighborhood must initiate with the city a concentrated program of public improvements according to the priorities listed on Figure E. Public improvements should be applied as part of an agreed commitment by neighborhood residents to improve their private property as the city improves the public property.

2. When streets are paved the entire streetscape from house to house should be considered and all improvements made as a package. This should include trees, sidewalks, boulevard sodding, street lighting as well as curbs and pavement.

3. Pavement width should not leave the houses sitting right on the street, but leave space for boulevard and setback.

4. Area zoning should be changed to encourage retention of existing single family and small apartment structures.

5. The community should support and encourage the commercial improvement program now going on in West Seventh.

6. A community clean-up program should be initiated in all parts of West Seventh each spring.

7. Tree planting should be encouraged in private yards and commercial areas.

8. The community organizations should take a lead role in organizing neighborhood concerns about local schools.

9. A major advertising effort should be initiated by the West Seventh community to publicize its improvements and change public attitudes about residing in West Seventh.

10. Each West Seventh pocket neighborhood should be encouraged to seek a unique identity and name and be encouraged to form associations to establish positive identities.



TREES

Most of the West Seventh neighborhood is scheduled for street tree planting in the spring of 1978. The type of trees varies, changing every few blocks. For a map detailing tree types on each street, see "Street Tree Master Plan", 1978.

Housing Issues

LOAN PROGRAM

Many residents of West Seventh had applied through the city for rehabilitation loans. However, many have also found this process cumbersome and have had problems getting a loan processed.

Goal

To improve the process and ability of West Seventh residents to rehabilitate their homes through public programs.

Recommendations

1. The West Seventh community should hire a person to assist residents to write loan applications, determine work they wish done and assist them with contractors and the city loan programs.

2. The city should conduct an awareness program to inform residents of the rehabilitation loans available through the city.

ABSENTEE LANDLORDS

Many West Seventh houses lie vacant and others deteriorate because of lack of owner interest.

Goal

To improve rental property in West Seventh.

Recommendations

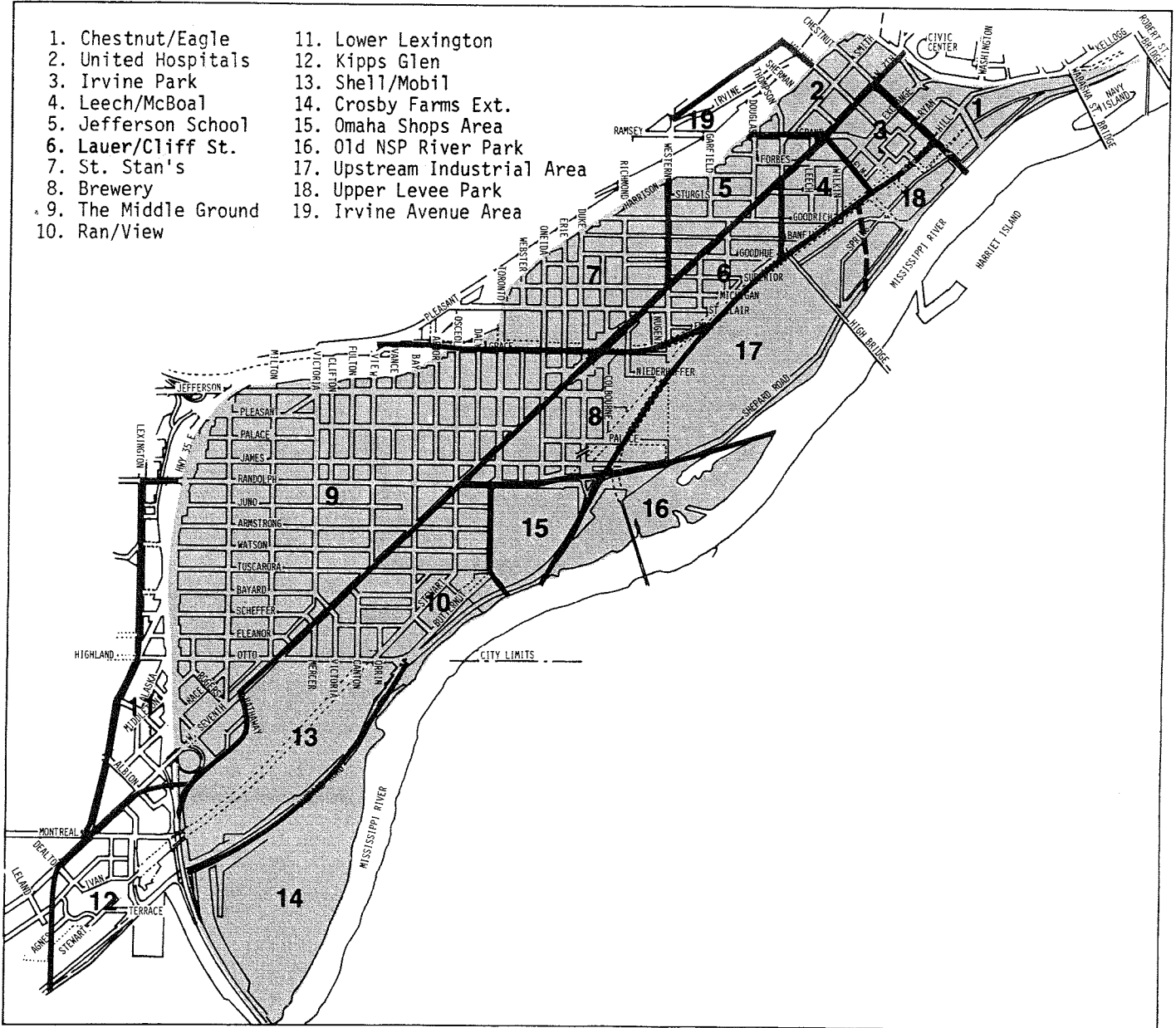
1. The codes be enforced by the city on all rental property.

2. The city reintroduce the non-owner occupied rehabilitation loan program to assist the rehabilitation of rental units.

3. The West Seventh community continue to monitor rental property in West Seventh to assure its proper maintenance.



Figure F West Seventh Neighborhoods



West Seventh Neighborhoods

West Seventh residential areas are divided from each other by many barriers. While there are problems maintaining areas large enough to support services, the divisions create unique, easily identifiable neighborhoods. The names and boundaries on Figure F are suggested for West Seventh neighborhoods.

Recommendations

1. That each pocket neighborhood select a permanent name as part of a neighborhood promotion program in West Seventh.

2. That the West Seventh Federation promote pocket neighborhoods identification and improvement as part of the housing improvements in West Seventh.

CHESTNUT-EAGLE STREET AREA

This area should be redeveloped as an area of housing, commercial and river recreation oriented uses. It should be the major connection between West Seventh neighborhoods and downtown. The area should be developed around a strong pedestrian circulation center.

Recommendations

1. The major vehicle connection between Shepard Road and Seven Corners should be along Eagle Street close to the Civic Center.
2. Chestnut should become a pedestrian oriented axis between West Seventh and the river.

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENT ON CHESTNUT STREET

The Street and Highway Plan does not agree with the arterial change to Eagle Street. It recommends that the main arterial connection from Shepard to West Seventh be on Chestnut Street. Consequently, the Planning Commission does not certify the proposal to use Eagle Street as the arterial connection to the downtown from Shepard Road.

3. Another access between Irvine Park and downtown should be created through Exchange or Ryan Streets.
4. A tie to the Historic Hill district should be maintained both visually and physically for pedestrians.
5. A park and boat landing should be created at Shepard and Chestnut.

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENT ON BOAT LANDING AT CHESTNUT

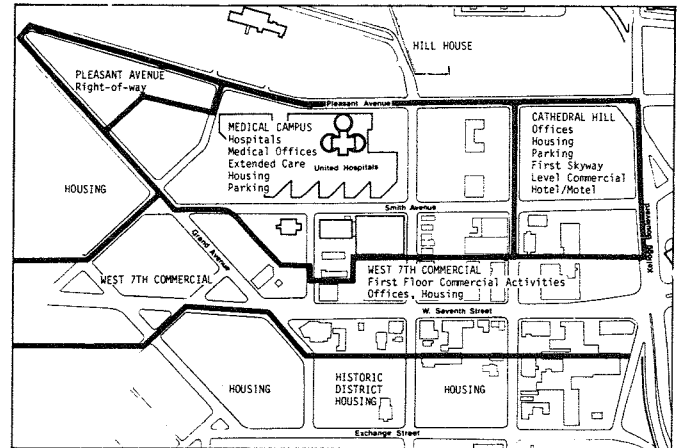
The River Corridor Plan does not call for a boat landing on Shepard at Chestnut, but it does call for enough right-of-way to build a bicycle and pedestrian link along the River, with access to downtown and Irvine Park. The Planning Commission does not certify the district's recommendation for a boat landing at this location.

6. The committee recommends that West Seventh approve the River Corridor Study's draft proposals to move Shepard Road away from the river bank so that a park space can be created at the river. The Road should be relocated at the bottom of the cliff.
7. That the West Seventh community work with the River Corridor Task Force, City Planning and Public Works to implement these changes.

UNITED HOSPITALS/SEVEN CORNERS AREA

This area is the subject of the more detailed "United Hospitals/Seven Corners Development Plan", which is divided into land use emphasis areas (see Figure G)

Figure G United Hospitals/Seven Corners Area



Recommendations

1. Medical Campus: Develop with hospitals and related uses, senior's housing, medium to high density housing, parking, and medically related commercial and hotel services, in the area between Kellogg and the Hospitals along Smith.
2. West Seventh Commercial Area: Commercial activity should be on ground level; limit other uses to upper floors. Retain 1890s commercial fronts directly on the street, with parking to the rear or side.
3. Cathedral Hill Area: Build mixed uses (housing, offices, commerce, parking ramps) at high density, with skyways from the hospitals.
4. South of West Seventh Area: Develop as a mixed use and residential complex oriented to the river, discourage industry, and allow pedestrian access to the river and the Downtown People Mover station.
5. Rezone the area between Sherman, West Seventh, Grand and Pleasant to B-5 to allow residential use as well as commercial.
6. New housing should serve downtown and hospital workers, seniors, singles and couples, and should be integrated with job locations, pedestrian access, and the river.
7. Improve traffic access from West Seventh to downtown, straighten out local access and limit truck routes.



8. Build a Downtown People Mover station on Smith and Kellogg with pedestrian access into the area.

9. Integrate fringe and local use parking.

IRVINE PARK

This area is subject to a redevelopment plan involving preservation and new construction.



Recommendations

1. Areas around the historic district between Exchange and West Seventh should be encouraged for residential uses.
2. No industrial expansion should occur in the area.
3. Apartments are encouraged but they should be low rise structures.

LEECH-MCBOAL

This area has undergone a recent Identified Treatment program to improve housing.

Recommendations

1. The neighborhood has successfully met its ITA objectives and should be approved for public improvements.
2. The area's zoning should be reduced from RM-2 (large apartments) to RM-1 (lower density apartments). This change would allow existing units to remain but not encourage large apartments.
3. The neighborhood should continue to monitor housing improvements, particularly on properties which the owner does not occupy.
4. Homes should be built on the present vacant lots.

5. Exchange Street should be vacated between Forbes and Wilkin.

JEFFERSON SCHOOL AREA

Recommendations

1. Several strong businesses make this an area where the Local Development Corporation could concentrate activities.
2. Street intersections with West Seventh need to be improved with landscaping of several triangles.
3. This area needs a strong housing improvement campaign aimed at homeowners and a code enforcement and loan incentive program to encourage absentee landlords to improve their properties. An ITA program would be the best approach to encourage improvements for homeowners.
4. Both private and public vacant land owners must be encouraged to maintain better appearance of their property.
5. Some apartments should be encouraged in this neighborhood. New apartments for downtown and hospital workers would add economic stability to the neighborhood.
6. The Salvation Army's plans to expand along the south side of Forbes to Douglas should be endorsed.
7. The Jefferson School-Cliff Street area should be made an ITA project emphasizing rehabilitation, public street improvements and expansion of community facilities.

LAUER-CLIFF STREET (INCLUDING EMMA STREET AREA)

Recommendations

1. This area, including Emma Street area, should remain residential. Homes are generally in good condition.
2. Gateways on Cliff Street at Smith and at St. Clair and at other streets entering from West Seventh would help pull together a boundary for this area.
3. The rail crossing at Western should be improved. Trains must not block the crossing over ten minutes.
4. Long trains have created increasing noise and vibrations. The railroad needs to be more sensitive to nearby residences. Railroad property also needs to be improved. The ITA Committee should discuss improvements with the railroad.

5. *Cliff Street needs landscaping. Trees should be planted along the street where none exist now.*

6. *Lauer Flats should be redeveloped as owner occupied units.*

7. *New construction in the River Valley should stay below the bluff in height.*

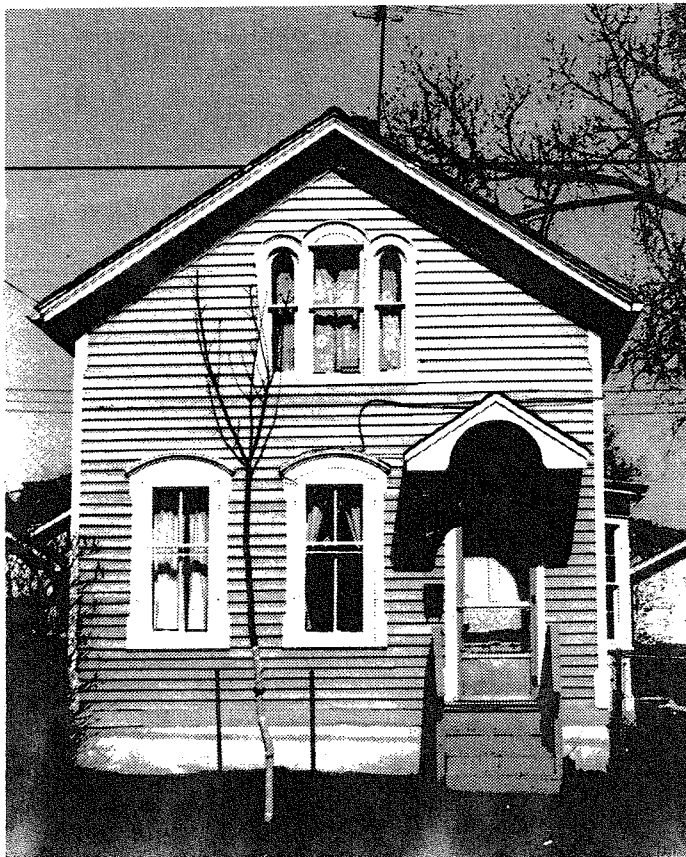
ST. STAN'S AREA

Recommendations

1. *First priority should be given to paving the streets south of St. Clair and those north of Goodhue. These areas were bypassed for public improvements in earlier programs. The homes on Superior between Duke and Erie need an alley sewer to catch drainage from the Pleasant Avenue embankment.*

2. *The area north of Goodhue should put together a proposal for home improvements in conjunction with new public improvements.*

3. *The North of St. Stan's project includes rehabilitation of most of the existing houses with about 16 removals. That program should be completed.*



BREWERY NEIGHBORHOOD

Goal

Maintain as a residential community.

Recommendations

1. *A major rehabilitation program involving resident commitment needs to be accomplished. Street and other public improvements should be offered in conjunction with substantial commitment from property owners for improvements.*

2. *The neighborhood needs assistance from the community to organize and develop an improvement plan.*

3. *Railroad areas to the south and west should be cleaned up. Residents should meet with railroad representatives to encourage improvements.*

4. *Both Schmidt's and the School Board should be encouraged in exterior improvements and general maintenance around their buildings.*

5. *River Corridor improvements should tie together bicycle and pedestrian trails in this area including a bluff side trail.*

6. *A residential advertising program should be started by the neighborhood to produce a positive image for potential home buyers.*

7. *This neighborhood should be surveyed to identify historic sites and properties including the significance of the many breweries which were once located here.*

THE MIDDLE GROUND OF WEST SEVENTH

Recommendations

1. *This neighborhood should organize to encourage upkeep of area houses. Almost all houses are in good condition.*

2. *Randolph is zoned for apartments and businesses. This zoning should remain to allow apartment construction along the bus line and main street.*

3. *Jefferson Avenue should remain a residential street. The Pleasant Avenue corridor intersection should be constructed so as not to increase traffic through this residential area.*

4. *Residential paving programs should start in this area to keep public investments on par with private housing investments.*

5. *Seed and plant the Pleasant Avenue corridor to keep dust down for the next 5-7 years before EIS is completed and construction starts.*



ADRIAN-HATHAWAY

This is a small area of a few houses and several apartment buildings. No recommendations are made for any changes to the area.

RAN-VIEW

Recommendations

1. This area should remain residential. New apartments should be constructed on Drake and along Mercer Avenue.
2. The Stewart-Butternut homeowners should be encouraged to rehabilitate their housing.
3. A park should be created at the center of the area.
4. Pedestrian bridge access to the river front across Shepard Road should be built.
5. All streets need improvements. These should be tied to residential improvements on the part of residents.
6. Sewers are needed on Foster and Mercer. These areas should be sewered when lines are extended for any new construction in the neighborhood.
7. Historic sites in this area should be identified as part of the area's special character.
8. Vacant land near rails should be developed with a green belt immediately adjacent to the tracks. The remaining vacant land should be used for housing.

LOWER LEXINGTON AVENUE

Goal

To maintain the good housing stock in this neighborhood.

Recommendations

1. Discourage traffic on Lexington Avenue by continued speed enforcement. Lower speeds around Riverside Park should be maintained.
2. The West Seventh community should encourage a pocket neighborhood program to assist neighborhoods in maintenance of housing and a neighborhood spirit for this small area.
3. Pedestrian crossings of Pleasant Avenue corridor should be constructed to tie this neighborhood back into West Seventh.

KIPP'S GLEN

Goal

To maintain Kipp's Glen as an area of primarily single family housing.

Recommendations

1. Housing should be maintained through a neighborhood encouragement program and monitoring by the neighborhood.
2. One area of Glen Terrace is zoned for high rise apartments. No others should be created in this area. Access to new apartments should be from Shepard or Elway, not through Glen Terrace or other internal residential streets.
3. A pedestrian overpass from Glen Terrace to Crosby Park would enhance access to the park and make possible a pedestrian and bicycle route from Highland Park to Crosby Farm.
4. A clear boundary between industrial areas to the west and the residential neighborhood should be established near Leland Street. Webb Publishing has been a good neighbor since discouraging employee use of Glen Terrace.

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENT ON DISTRICT 9 BOUNDARY CHANGES

The lower Lexington Avenue and Kipp's Glen neighborhoods are presently in District 15. Residents of these neighborhoods participated in the District 9 Plan and the plan recommends on page 1 that they go through the established boundary change process to become part of District 9. While the Planning Commission supports recommendations 1, 3 and 4 for lower Lexington Avenue and the three recommendations for Kipp's Glen, the Planning Commission wishes to note that these areas have not yet sought inclusion in District 9. The Commission has no position on the recommendation to change the district boundaries, but recommends that the appropriate boundary change process be used to resolve this issue.

IRVINE AVENUE

Recommendations

1. *The area should remain a residential site and street restricted to local access use.*
2. *Public improvements on Irvine Avenue should be done immediately to halt deterioration.*
3. *The collapsed portion of the street should be repaired replacing the original stone wall. Other stone walls should be repaired before they also collapse.*
4. *The street should be retained as two levels. However, better traffic control arrangements should be worked out between the residents and Public Works.*
5. *Vegetation should be properly trimmed and mowed to give a cleaner, maintained look to the public right-of-way.*
6. *A joint maintenance program should be arranged between the residents and Public Works.*
7. *Irvine Avenue and Walnut Street should remain a public access route and be developed as an integral part of the green open space planned between the bluff and West Seventh Street improvements. These plans and improvements should be an extension of and complimentary to the Irvine Park restoration.*
8. *Commercial electrical wiring serving major institutional uses along Pleasant Avenue should be rerouted off of Irvine and Walnut onto other locations below the hill.*



TRANSPORTATION

West Seventh households are greatly dependent on public transit. However, workers have an overwhelming access to autos. If West Seventh is to maintain attractiveness as a residential area, it must improve its accessibility to employment opportunities.

West Seventh is served by several bus routes to and from downtown. It has no north-south public transit routes. All areas of the district are within 1/4 mile of a bus route.

The district has not had major public investments in categories such as street paving, parks, sewers, lighting or other community services, except in Irvine Park and the St. Clair area ITA.

Roadways

THE STREET AND HIGHWAY PLAN

Most major roadways in West Seventh run from east to west or from southwest to northwest. The only exception will be Victoria, designated as a neighborhood collector route. (Smith Avenue from the High Bridge to Grand Avenue is also a north-south segment.)

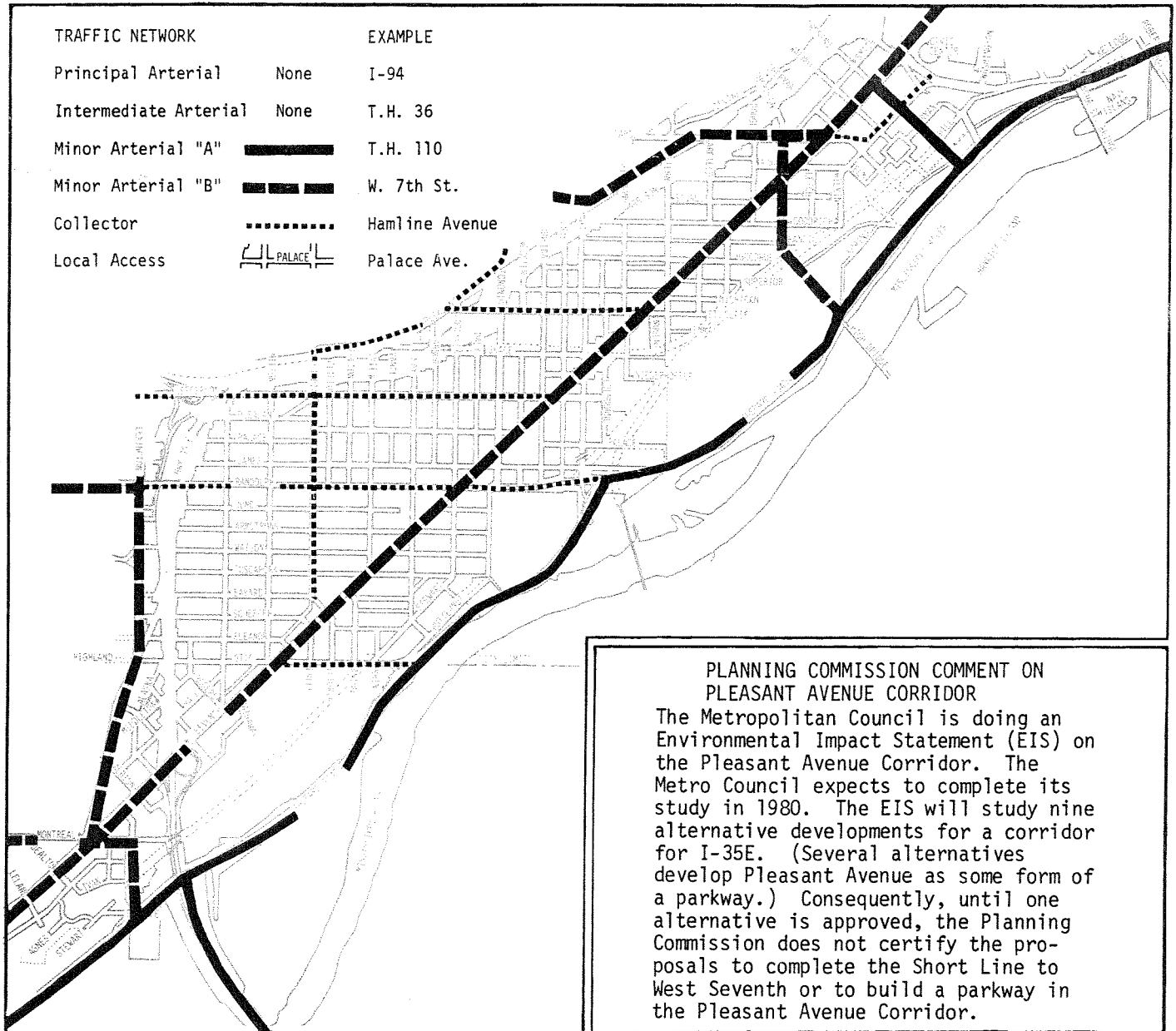
The implication for Victoria is some improvement in street surfacing and possibly some widening. However, no changes are proposed by Public Works in the near future.

Recommendations

1. *That the street classifications as listed below be approved by West Seventh residents. They are the same as contained in the Street and Highway Plan:*
 - a. *Principal Arterials: None;*
 - b. *Intermediate Arterials: None;*
 - c. *Minor Arterial A: Pleasant Avenue and Shepard Road;*
 - d. *Minor Arterial B: Lexington Avenue, West Seventh, Smith Avenue and Grand Avenue;*
 - e. *Neighborhood Collectors: Elway, Otto, Victoria, Randolph, Jefferson, St. Clair and Exchange/Ramsey Streets; and*
 - f. *Local Access/Residential: All other streets.**In addition, the following streets should be designed with Parkway Level B design elements: Pleasant Avenue, Lexington Avenue and Shepard Road (see Figure H).*
2. *No change in Victoria occur until after all other roadway segments to the north and west be completed and traffic patterns evaluated.*



Figure H Streets and Highways Designations



3. The Pleasant Avenue corridor should be built as a parkway similar to Johnson Parkway or Summit Avenue in St. Paul with at grade crossings of other streets

4. Traffic coming from Fort Snelling should be rerouted to give equal access to both Shepard Road and West Seventh at the St. Paul side of the bridge.

5. A sign identifying West Seventh Street should be erected on Highway 5 as it crosses the river.

WEST SEVENTH STREET-HIGH SPEEDS

Residents and businessmen have complained of the high speeds and posted limits on West Seventh. The level of speeding is well within the city averages.

However, the volume of traffic on the road and the large number of trucks gives the impression of little opportunity to stop or to cross the street. Particularly dangerous for residents near Lexington is access to Riverside Playground.

Goal

To reduce traffic volumes and speeds on West Seventh.

Recommendations

1. A long term solution is to improve Shepard Road for truck traffic and construct the Pleasant Avenue Parkway for other vehicles around West Seventh. For the short term, the Police should spend some extra time monitoring speeds on West Seventh.

2. The speed limits around Riverside Park should be reduced to 30 mph on West Seventh and Lexington.

WEST SEVENTH STREET PARKING

Goal

To provide adequate parking along West Seventh without disrupting the commercial strip activities. Parking problems are worse at Randolph and St. Clair intersections with West Seventh.

Recommendations

1. Parking should be provided by businesses either to the rear or to the side of the business. Commercial buildings should continue to front the street at a 0' setback. Buildings should not be created with parking directly in front of them.

2. Parking spaces should be encouraged behind buildings, but landscaped from adjacent residential areas.

3. The neighborhood and city should investigate joint use parking areas which could serve more than one business.

4. The neighborhood and city should explore use of short streets near triangles as parking areas.

WEST SEVENTH--TRUCK TRAFFIC

The number of trucks using West Seventh has caused serious conflict between commercial use and the street's role as a truck highway. Trucks use West Seventh because Shepard Road is considered dangerous.

Recommendations

1. The design of Shepard Road should be improved to allow safe use by cars and trucks.

2. Signage at Fort Snelling Bridge should encourage trucks to use Shepard Road.

3. Shepard Road should receive the Highway 5 designation for a truck route. West Seventh should be redesignated as a Business 5 route.

THROUGH TRAFFIC USING MILTON, CHATSWORTH, VICTORIA
Through traffic from the Short Line and Jefferson and Randolph Avenues use the above three streets as through routes to reach West Seventh. Victoria is designated as a neighborhood collector route to bring immediate neighborhood traffic to the through streets. The other streets are designated residential.

Goal

To eliminate through traffic from residential streets.

Recommendations

1. The long term proposal is a roadway in the Pleasant Avenue corridor to connect the Short Line with West Seventh. For the short term, a basket-weave pattern of stop signs will be placed on Milton and Chatsworth to discourage through traffic. Victoria should only be carrying neighborhood traffic. Any increase in through traffic should be reviewed by residents and by Public Works to see if problems develop on Victoria.

2. The stop signals at Victoria and Randolph will be monitored to determine if they are not working.

SHEPARD ROAD

Goal

To improve the river front in West Seventh and to improve recreational access to it.

Recommendations

1. The River Corridor Task Force proposal to build a new Shepard Road along the bluff and a parkway along the river should be endorsed. See also recommendations dealing with park space in the area west of Chestnut Street.

2. Shepard Road should be designated as part of the Great River Road system from downtown to Fort Snelling bridge.

3. Intersections on Shepard at Elway and I-35E are dangerous and should be improved.



CHESTNUT-EAGLE STREET AREA

The Public Works Department is proposing the construction of an interchange between Chestnut and Shepard Roads at the riverfront. The West Seventh Planning Committee has recommended moving the interchange eastward to Eagle Street, matching Eagle back to Chestnut Street at Exchange.

Recommendation

1. Any commitments to location and design of the intersection of a road with Shepard Road should wait further review and analysis of the Chestnut-Eagle area and its future land uses and river front proposals. Moves to initiate a road alignment on Chestnut are premature until the future land uses and their design for this area have been determined.

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENT ON CHESTNUT STREET

The Street and Highway Plan does not agree with the arterial change to Eagle Street. It recommends that the main arterial connection from Shepard to West Seventh be on Chestnut Street. Consequently, the Planning Commission does not certify the proposal to use Eagle Street as the arterial connection to the downtown from Shepard Road.

HIGH BRIDGE

Many proposals for the High Bridge have been made. The existing bridge has been a landmark for the area. It is also a much used link between West Seventh and the West Side.

The West Side District 3 Plan recommends that a new bridge be built alongside the existing bridge.

Goal

To maintain a neighborhood to neighborhood connection between the West Side and West Seventh area without disrupting the Leech-McBoal or Cliff Street areas.

Recommendation

1. That existing High Bridge structure should remain or a new structure be built on the existing alignment to Smith Avenue. The alignment should not be widened.

DOWNTOWN CONNECTIONS

The Street and Highway Plan has not adequately addressed the interface between West Seventh and downtown. The present layout of streets does not adequately pass traffic into downtown. The neighborhoods adjacent to downtown are cut up.

Goal

To improve traffic access from West Seventh to downtown while straightening out appropriate access routes.

Recommendations

1. Pleasant Avenue should meet Kellogg, Sixth Street and Ninth Street using at grade intersections.

2. Smith should be used as a collector route from Ninth Street to the United Hospital area with intersections at Kellogg and Sixth/Fifth Streets.

3. West Seventh should not be widened between Kellogg and Grand Avenues. Proposals to do so should be removed from existing street plans and redevelopment proposals.

4. Depending upon new construction or rehabilitation plans, West Seventh should be redesigned as the major gateway or entrance to the downtown from the southwest.

5. Exchange Street east of Chestnut should be oriented to act as part of the connection between the downtown and Shepard Road. The segment west of Chestnut should be discouraged for use by through traffic.

6. Shepard Road should be a designated Great River Road Route.

7. Hill Street should remain open as an alternate route up the hill.

LEXINGTON AVENUE/SHORT LINE

Lexington Avenue, theoretically part of the city's parkway system, has suffered severe traffic problems as autos attempt to travel from the Midway area to the I-35E bridge.

Goal

To return Lexington Avenue to a parkway nature.

1. The Police Department should continue strict enforcement of traffic speeds on Lexington.

2. Short Line Road should be completed as two express lanes to a connection with the I-35E bridge as the first part of construction along Pleasant Avenue.

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENT ON PLEASANT AVENUE CORRIDOR

The Metropolitan Council is doing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the Pleasant Avenue Corridor. The Metro Council expects to complete its study in 1980. The EIS will study nine alternative developments for a corridor for I-35E. (Several alternatives develop Pleasant Avenue as some form of a parkway.) Consequently, until one alternative is approved, the Planning Commission does not certify the proposals to complete the Short Line to West Seventh or to build a parkway in the Pleasant Avenue Corridor.

3. Lexington should be redesigned along a parkway cross-section to reduce traffic and speeds.

Sidewalks

Problems

1. Sidewalks in many areas are deteriorating or broken.

2. Commercial area sidewalks are cluttered with street posts, meters and signs.

3. Sidewalks are not cleared in the winter.

4. Sidewalks bordering public land are not cleared or maintained.

5. Sidewalks between residential areas and the downtown are not maintained.

Goal

To improve and maintain sidewalks space throughout West Seventh area.

Recommendations

1. Sidewalks along commercial development should be a minimum of 10' wide.

2. The Federation should take the lead to petition in areas where business or industries front the sidewalks. Areas most in need of sidewalk replacement are those near downtown.

3. Sidewalks in West Seventh adjoining public property should be maintained and cleared in winter, particularly in areas of new street construction around the Civic Center. The city should maintain adequate sidewalk space in areas where redevelopment is occurring. (New asphalt was paved on all sidewalks in 35E area along Kellogg in 1977.)

4. Sidewalk shoveling ordinances should be enforced. Community organizations could begin programs to assist older people to clear walks.

5. Pedestrian traffic signals at Alton, Montreal/Lexington, Ann Street and at Kellogg and West Seventh must be lengthened to allow time to cross.

6. A sidewalk on 35E bridge would greatly improve access from West Seventh to the river valley on the south side of the river.

7. Any new construction on the High Bridge should maintain the existing wide walks for pedestrian use of the bridge and its views.

Public Transit

Bus ridership is high and local routes provide excellent service to and from the downtown and to Highland Park.

West Seventh carries enough bus passengers to make a light rail system successful from downtown to Lexington or possibly to Highland Park center.

Bus routes on West Seventh provide no north-south access. They also do not reach many of the industrial and rail centers where most West Seventh residents work.

Goal

To improve the speed and efficiency and access of public transit.

Recommendations

1. A light rail line on West Seventh from downtown to Fort Snelling should be considered by the MTC.

2. More bus shelters should be built on West Seventh to encourage use of public transit, especially at sites where transfers occur.

3. Bus routes to West Seventh employment centers should be initiated.



4. Overall bus service in the West Seventh area is good. Existing scheduling headways and routes should be maintained. However, reductions in service after 6:30 p.m. greatly reduce dependence upon the buses since they can only be used during working hours. Services after dark should be improved to encourage overall transit use.

5. Buses from routes 14, 9 and 10 tend to bunch up and travel in convoys between downtown and West Seventh. Greater spacing there would improve service.

Bicycles

Because the area is flat, it is good for bicycles. The bluff areas on either side of the residential neighborhoods make good choices for location of recreational bicycle paths. However, West Seventh itself is too dangerous for cycling.

Goal

To provide safe, direct routes for bicycling in West Seventh.

Recommendations

1. Bicycle routes be constructed along Pleasant Avenue, Shepard Road and Cliff Street into the downtown.

2. North/south streets be selected for use as bicycle routes between the two major paths recommended above.

UTILITIES

Sewers

Several places in West Seventh do not have sewer and water access because of lack of earlier development. Today costs are extremely high.

Goal

To overcome soil problems to allow proper utility service to all areas of West Seventh.

Recommendations

1. The city should initiate a lot development subsidy for utilities to serve development in West Seventh. It should function along the same public/private investment ratios as other city projects.

2. Sewers under this process should be considered for Mercer and Forster Streets in Ran-View.

Street Lighting

Only West Seventh Street and the St. Clair/West Seventh ITA have ornamental street lights. The majority of property owners on both sides of the street must petition to have the city put in ornamental lighting. The cost is assessed against the owner.

The other option is the Identified Treatment Area Program (ITA). As part of this program, new street lighting is provided assessment free.

If a particular block now is too dark in areas, the city will place a street light on a wooden pole at a mid-block location without assessment. This is initiated by petition of at least one resident of the block.

Goal

Adequately lighted streets and sidewalks for the West Seventh area.

Recommendations

1. Ornamental street lighting should continue to be included as part of all city paving projects.

2. The district should continue to use the ITA program to provide street improvements, including lighting for areas where rehabilitation of housing must occur.

Storm Sewers

No major storm sewer work is suggested for the West Seventh area.

One area which is experiencing storm runoff problems is Superior Street between Erie and Oneida. Runoff from the Pleasant Avenue embankment brings large volumes of water and dirt into the backyards of properties on the north side of Superior.

West Seventh at Walnut also has problems during rains and needs to be evaluated by Public Works.

Recommendation

1. A sewer should be placed in the alley behind Superior to take runoff from the embankment. The problem being one created by the new roadway, the cost should be publicly borne.

Gas, Electric and Phone

Recommendation

1. Electric and phone line service should be located to the rear of all properties, along the alley or a back lot line easement.

URBAN DESIGN

Urban design is architecture at a community level rather than the level of individual buildings. It addresses landscape and streetscape and how buildings fit together to make up the identity of a community.

The "Fort Road" brochure, sponsored by Criteria, Inc., and the West Seventh Federation began suggestions for improvements and a theme for the commercial streets.

The West Seventh Federation has retained Stan Fishman Associates to refine an urban design proposal for West Seventh Street. These are the beginnings of an urban design format for the entire West Seventh area.

Recommendations

1. *Fort Road design criteria should be used and required in all city sponsored activities along West Seventh Street/Fort Road.*

2. *As part of any improvements along West Seventh Street, many of the unused triangles should be landscaped and developed as part of an overall design theme for West Seventh, as the Gateway to St. Paul.*



SOCIAL PLAN

The social services in West Seventh are an attraction to residents. They help to make up many of the cohesive elements in the community as well as providing mutual support for residents. Maintenance of West Seventh Street's community identity depends on them.

HEALTH CARE

Goal

To maintain and improve the accessibility of West Seventh residents to health care.

Problems

1. Health care costs are beyond most residents ability to pay. Services are becoming more distant as they congregate at hospital locations. West Seventh is fortunate to be near major hospitals, such as United and St. Joseph's. However, the large medical complexes can be intimidating. Because of the low incomes of many West Seventh residents, use of the public hospital (St. Paul Ramsey) has always been high.

2. At the Helping Hand Health Clinic, services are provided on a sliding scale fee system based on patient income. The clinic also attempt to give more personalized service. The clinic can attack health problems from a preventive manner because of its approach to serve the entire West Seventh area rather than individual patients.

The clinic is also a focus for much of the health care information available to West Seventh residents.

Both health care systems are necessary to the well-being of the community.

Goals

To encourage more involvement of private physicians in community health care in West Seventh.

Placing the Helping Hand Health Clinic on a firm financial basis.

Recommendations

1. *The West Seventh community make a major push to see the Helping Hand Clinic funded on a regular basis through the county's and city's budgets, and support their expansion to improve services.*

2. *The community should come up with a budget proposal for Helping Hand in time for the budgeting reviews conducted by the city in August through October.*



3. The West Seventh residents, through their major organizations, make contact with doctors and hospitals in the West Seventh area to encourage greater understanding and cooperation concerning West Seventh health problems.

4. The city should begin an intensive program to monitor industrial, auto, and general environmental pollution, and pass ordinances to allow prosecution of polluters.

EDUCATION

There were 2,138 children enrolled in school in West Seventh in the 1975-76 school year. There are three public schools located in the district: Jefferson Elementary, Adams Elementary and Monroe Junior High. High school students are sent to schools in other districts, particularly Humboldt High School. The parochial schools in the West Seventh area are St. James and St. Francis. Seventy-two percent of the students are enrolled in public schools and 28% in private schools.

Public Schools

The area, along with the rest of St. Paul, is experiencing a decline in enrollment. School test results are below the city averages. Students begin above city average but fall progressively farther behind as they progress through the schools. Forty-three percent of the population has graduated from high school.

Last year West Seventh lost its high school as Monroe Senior was closed. Students now attend Humboldt on the West Side. Junior high students are also allowed to attend Humboldt Junior High and many do. Attendance at Monroe has suffered. West Seventh residents no longer feel they have ownership or control over the public schools which their children attend.

School age population is dropping in West Seventh. If local schools to the junior high level are to remain open, the West Seventh neighborhoods must attract more families to live in the area. If more schools are closed, the area will become less attractive to potential new residents, only worsening the school situation.

Goal

To improve school programs and education offerings in the West Seventh neighborhood.

1. West Seventh residents must participate more closely with neighborhood schools. The community service groups and the Federation should encourage involvement of parents and other residents in operation and programming for Adams, Jefferson and Monroe Schools.

2. The West Seventh community organizations should formally participate in school planning to insure that West Seventh interests are considered.

3. The Federation should form a school task force to focus neighborhood concern over education.

4. Adams, Jefferson and Monroe should remain in use as schools by the school district.

5. Recreation programs between schools, city and community should be fostered, to encourage use of school buildings.

6. Security/crime problems in the schools must be addressed by parents and the community, to report crimes and to work with schools to prevent occurrences.



Adult Education

The West Seventh area does have a successful adult education program at Oneida Education Center. Many residents have taken college level, basic skills, and art classes at Oneida.

Recommendations

1. *The West Seventh community continue to endorse and support Oneida's work in the area.*
2. *The West Seventh Community Center consider space for adult education programs in any new center expansions.*
3. *The Federation consider programs to assist residents with tuition payments to attend adult education programs and classes.*

PUBLIC SAFETY

The West Seventh area is now part of the B4 Team Police unit. This approach to decentralized policing has improved West Seventh contact with the Police Department. The following problems were discussed concerning crime in West Seventh.

In West Seventh the Crime Victim Crisis Center assists victims of crime.

Problems

1. *Vandalism and burglary are the major crime concerns.*
2. *Prosecution and sentencing of offenders does not seem to be working.*
3. *A rash of crime occurs in one area and then shifts.*
4. *School crimes affecting students.*

Goal

To reduce crime and fear of crime in West Seventh.

Recommendations

1. *The West Seventh Federation should initiate a crime awareness program. It should help to determine major causes of crime in West Seventh and assist residents to respond to crime problems in their area.*
2. *Residents should attempt to follow suspected criminals through the justice system to assure guilty are prosecuted. Residents, victims and witnesses of crime should work with police and the Crime Victims Crisis Center to encourage city attorneys to prosecute guilty parties.*

3. *Residents should contact the West Seventh Police B4 Team or the Crime Victims Crisis Center to become involved in crime prevention programs now available such as the Neighborhood Watch program.*

4. *The community should explore programs to reimburse home owners for installation of locks and other security items.*

5. *The Police Department should consider a site office in the District 9 area, preferably at the community center, for police serving the District 9 area.*

6. *The Liquor Patrol Limits should be removed city-wide, lessening the incentives for bars to concentrate on West Seventh Street.*

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community Center

The West Seventh Street Neighborhood Center operates at 175 South Western in the old St. Stanislaus School. The center is operated by a board of area residents and receives funding from the United Way. Other affiliated activities and organizations occur in the center or have offices there.

The center was incorporated in 1971 and has become a major center for West Seventh community activities.

Overwhelming support and need for the services offered in the center was depicted in surveys of West Seventh residents. In the fall of 1977 both the resource center and the City of St. Paul conducted surveys of West Seventh residents to determine their concern. Both surveys showed support for an expanded operation at the community center. The overriding need is for space to house existing programs and support new ones. In 1979 the city approved a capital grant to be used to explore a new building at St. Clair playground.





Goal

To provide adequate space, in a central location, to meet community social service needs.

Recommendations

1. A permanent location for the community center should be built at St. Clair playground, or Monroe Junior High should be considered.

2. The Neighborhood Center Board, affiliated agencies, and the city should review options for a new structure for use by various community agencies and services.

3. A committee of West Seventh Neighborhood Center Board members, West Seventh community agencies and other residents has been formed to put together a proposal for funding, purchase, construction and maintenance expenses.

4. A communications facility should be maintained in the community for general support and for Cable TV access.

Salvation Army

The Salvation Army Corps Community Center has been a part of St. Paul since 1887, and has operated since 1959 at 401 West Seventh Street in the old Gem Theater. The Center is operated by the Salvation Army and is incorporated under a 33 person advisory board of St. Paul citizens. It receives funding from the United Way. Its programs are complementary to the Neighborhood Center.

The Salvation Army has grown into a major center for senior and youth work in the area. It has reached its capacity and is limited by its present facility.

The overwhelming support for expanded senior and youth services is shown by the success of its present programs and calls for new programs.

Goal

To provide adequate space for social services and community youth needs in the West Seventh Street area.

Recommendations

1. The Salvation Army remodel present facilities and expand between Smith and Douglas or Forbes Streets.

2. The Salvation Army Advisory Board review the existing structure, determine remodeling and plan to purchase property for added new structures.

3. The Salvation Army consider Family Emergency Housing in its plans.

Fire Stations

Presently, two fire stations serve West Seventh directly. Station 1 at West Seventh and Ramsey, and Station 10 at Randolph and Bay provide adequate protection.

The City's Fire Station Plan recommends the site of Station 10 be evaluated. The existing structure is quite old and needs repairs or removal. The Plan suggests a station site further southwest be considered.

The Fire Station Plan recommended no change until a more in depth study occurred. Discussion among West Seventh residents addressed concerns about moving the station from Randolph. The bluffs prevent efficient use of Station 10 to areas outside West Seventh. Relocation of the station would provide the same problem for West Seventh.

Goal

To maintain existing service to West Seventh while improving fire protection to areas further west.

Recommendations

1. That the Randolph and Bay Station 10 be refurbished at its present site until the city conducts a study of fire protection involving residents of Districts 9 and 15.

2. If a new site is desired, the best site to serve West Seventh would be a station located on Randolph between the existing station and Lexington Avenue.

3. West Seventh Federation should meet with the District 15 and District 14 organizations to agree on a location for Station 10.

Libraries

The West Seventh area has no permanent public library facility. Most of the neighborhood is outside of the service area of existing libraries.

The area lacks the population to warrant a branch library. However, the bookmobile stops once a week at Palace Playground and at Sibley Shopping Center.

Goal

To improve public library opportunities in the West Seventh area.

Recommendations

1. A lending library should be planned and constructed as part of a new community center in the West Seventh area.

2. The bookmobile program should be expanded to include stops at Riverside and Winslow/West Seventh neighborhood center.

3. The bookmobile is a necessary part of library service in West Seventh. It should not be removed unless a more permanent library service is provided within the District 9 area.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Most of West Seventh is within 1.5 miles of large open space. Areas at the far western and far eastern ends of the district are not close to recreational space. Large areas of West Seventh are not within ½ mile of any passive open space. Because of the considerable greenery around West Seventh, its setting in the river valley, and the yard space that each house has, lack of public open space may not be a problem.

The area lacks access to riverfront open space.

Existing park space is available. However, the cut-up nature of the residential areas prevents easy access. The neighborhood desires a pocket park system.

Figure I shows existing and proposed major park areas in or near West Seventh area.

Goal

Increase open space areas in West Seventh.

Recommendations

1. A continuous green space along the river as proposed in the River Corridor Plan should be created.

2. A park at the Upper Landing (where Shepard and Chestnut now meet) should be built. The park should extend from Chestnut westward to the High Bridge.

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENT ON BOAT LANDING AT CHESTNUT

The River Corridor Plan does not call for a boat landing on Shepard at Chestnut, but it does call for enough right-of-way to build a bicycle and pedestrian link along the River, with access to downtown and Irvine Park. The Planning Commission does not certify the district's recommendation for a boat landing at this location.

3. The old NSP power plant area should be used as park space.

4. Crosby Farms expansion should continue to east side of I-35E Bridge.

5. Access to the riverfront should be maintained at the Ran-View area, Randolph and Shepard Road, from the High Bridge steps, at the Upper Landing and at Crosby Farms and Elway.

6. Cross-country ski trails and bike paths in the greenways next to the railroad tracks should be considered.

7. Pedestrian bridges should be constructed across Shepard at Elway, Bay Street and Duke Street and lower James to provide direct pedestrian access to riverfront park space.

8. Pocket parks should be considered for each sub-neighborhood of West Seventh. These should be built and maintained as a cooperative agreement between neighborhood residents and the Parks and Recreation Division of the city.

9. Existing parks and playgrounds should remain as now operating.

10. The Pleasant Avenue corridor should have bike and pedestrian paths.

Ramsey Playground

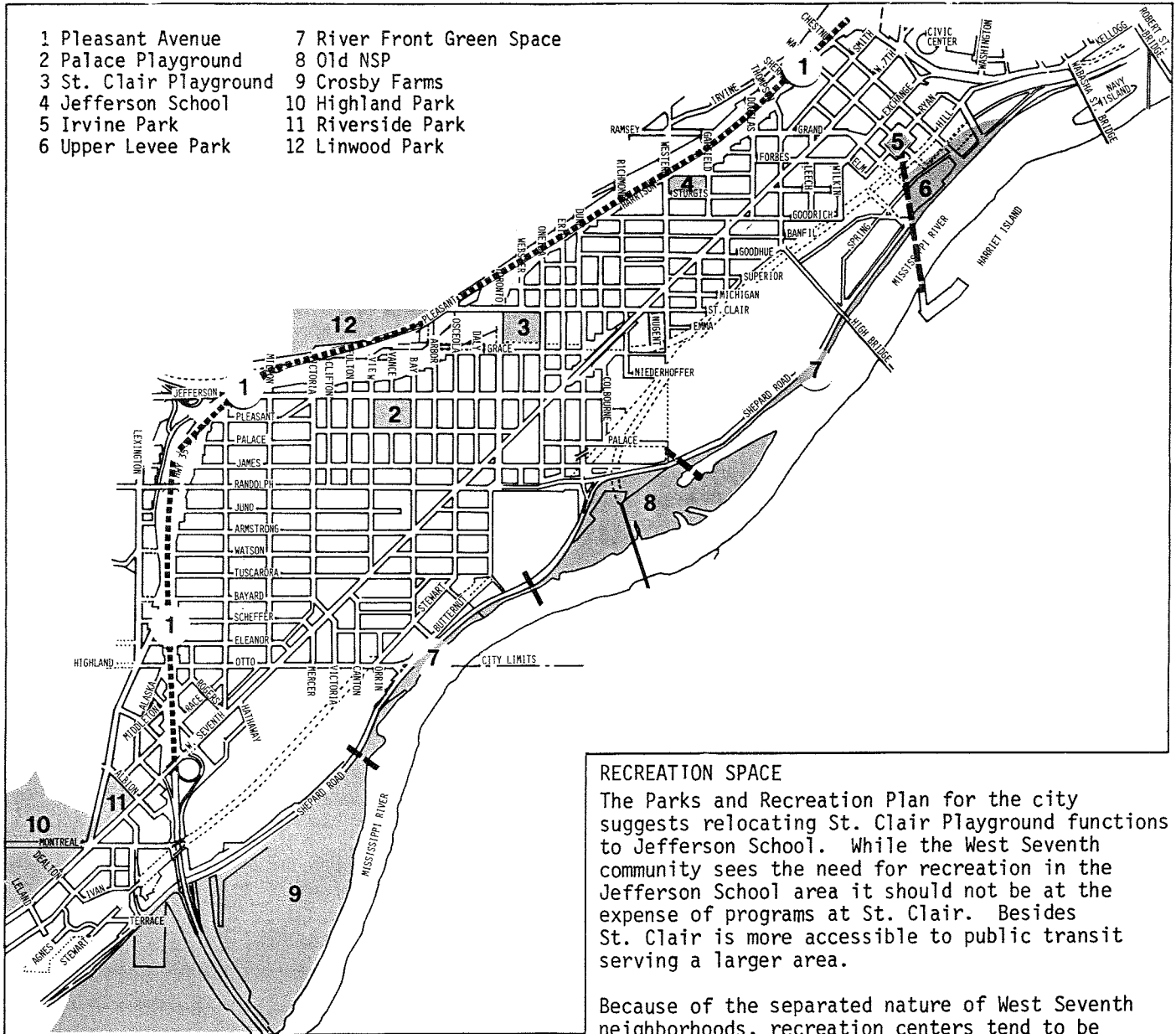
When United Hospitals construction occurred, the city sold Ramsey Playground for the new hospital. The community granted approval on the condition that the proceeds be used to purchase new playground space in West Seventh.

Recommendation

1. Funds equal to that received from the sale of Ramsey Playground be used to purchase space for pocket parks or for recreational expansion at Jefferson School.



Figure 1 Open Space—Playgrounds in the West Seventh Area



Recreation Programs

Both Palace and St. Clair Playgrounds, the neighborhood center and the Salvation Army provide recreation opportunities in the West Seventh area. In addition, a number of social and religious groups provide recreation opportunities for their members. Riverside Playground also provides recreational opportunities.

Goal

Improve recreation opportunities in the West Seventh area.

RECREATION SPACE

The Parks and Recreation Plan for the city suggests relocating St. Clair Playground functions to Jefferson School. While the West Seventh community sees the need for recreation in the Jefferson School area it should not be at the expense of programs at St. Clair. Besides St. Clair is more accessible to public transit serving a larger area.

Because of the separated nature of West Seventh neighborhoods, recreation centers tend to be identified with an immediate area rather than the whole community.

Recommendations

1. That city recreation programs be maintained at St. Clair and Palace playgrounds.
2. A recreation program be initiated at Jefferson when funds become available.
3. Recreation programs offered by the community center and the Salvation Army should be considered when programming future recreation programs for West Seventh.



4. Small neighborhood areas should be obtained for spontaneous use by neighborhood children.

5. The city should establish some joint use agreement with the schools to use Riverside School facilities in conjunction with Riverside Playground.

TEENAGERS

A critical need is evident for space for teenage people to congregate in a supervised situation, but without organized programs. Teenagers want space to "hang around" but which allows spontaneous recreation to occur.

1. The community provide supervised space for spontaneous recreation or "hang around" space for teenagers.

2. The neighborhood center should initiate a campaign to provide a regular group of adult volunteers to operate a teen center at the community center.

Social Programs and Activities

Many programs are offered in the West Seventh area through its various organizations.

DAY CARE

Although major providers are pulling out of the day care area, there is still a need for day care facilities to serve West Seventh parents.

Most parents want the child cared for in a family setting. Through the family center and co-op at the community center, a program has been started to assist people to start family day care operations.

Recommendations

1. West Seventh day care providers and the family center continue to encourage day care opportunities.

2. A full time progressive day care center for working families is needed and efforts to re-establish one should be supported by District 9 residents.

SENIORS

The number of people over 65 in the West Seventh area is increasing. They now represent over 15% of the population of the district.

Goal

To allow seniors to remain non-institutionalized as long as possible.

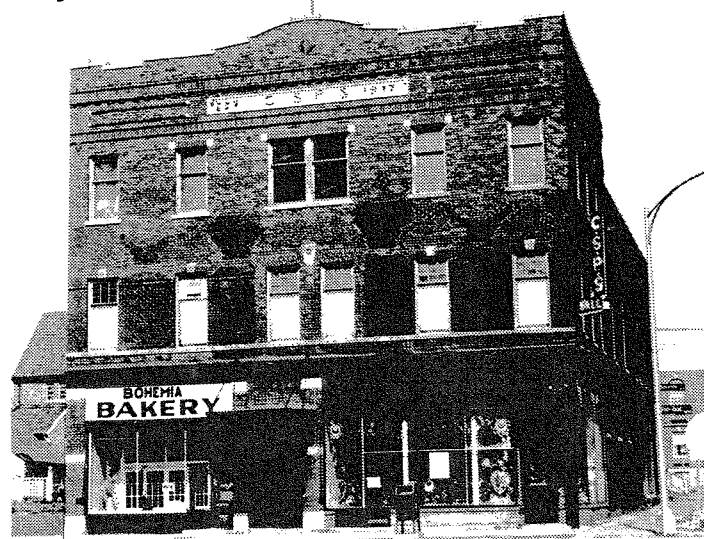
Recommendations

1. Home health care, and home-maker, home maintenance services programs should be brought to West Seventh to help serve and keep seniors in their homes.

2. Seniors housing arrangements be created to allow a variety of opportunities while keeping older people in their neighborhood.

3. The community center, Federation and other service agencies work on a transportation program to supplement public transit for seniors in the West Seventh neighborhoods.

4. Programs for youth employment be tied to serving the needs of older members of the West Seventh neighborhoods.





CULTURAL PROGRAMS

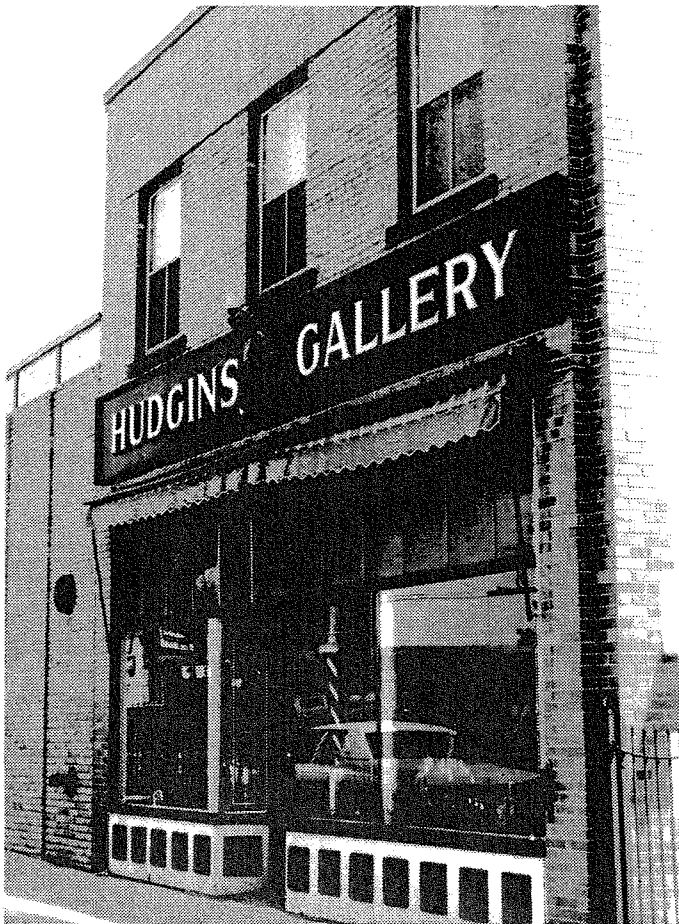
Currently, the opportunities for local art and culture are very limited in West Seventh.

Goal

To encourage and preserve neighborhood folk and ethnic arts and culture through widespread community participation.

Recommendations

1. *The West Seventh Federation, Community Center, and COMPAS intersection should cultivate neighborhood arts and cultural opportunities and assist programs to find suitable space.*
2. *Local community institutions like the Community Reporter newspaper and the Communications Center should be protected as long as they continue to serve the public good.*
3. *A local history interpretive center should be established by West Seventh to bolster the Fort Road theme, preferably using an existing old home in the area.*



ECONOMIC PLAN

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The community has recognized the key role of the commercial strip in revitalizing the neighborhood. The West Seventh business community and the West Seventh Federation have joined ranks to tackle business problems. In the past two years, a Local Development Corporation was formed to encourage business investment. It has made loans resulting in marked improvements on the street.

The result has been a steady improvement in West Seventh's image of itself. If successful businesses can be retained in the area in the near future, the image will be further upgraded, attracting more customers and entrepreneurs.

The Federation received grants from the McKnight Foundation to fund a market study and design study. A tourism potential study was also secured. This section captures only an overview of the implementation suggestions from these.

This past year the St. Paul Companies and Northwest Area Foundation have funded a program which will allow the Federation and LDC to further participate and control development decisions in their neighborhood.

The Market for West Seventh

The West Seventh community lacks the population to support the variety of small businesses which used to thrive there. Great increases in population are unlikely in the near future. However, as population losses are reduced, businesses that serve local needs will stay.

The community needs more retail stores, including the convenience types. The area would benefit from a business community that does not destroy the social fabric of the neighborhood. Business in turn would profit from being located in a neighborhood with a positive image.

While most shoppers on West Seventh Street are from the neighborhood, the number of businesses on the street that depend on this market is not large. West Seventh has access to a larger city or regional population to support other types of commerce. Most of the businesses expanding on the street have tapped into this market.

West Seventh also attracts businesses because commercial frontage exists.

Location

The major concentrations of business frontage occur from St. Clair to Seven Corners and in the area around Randolph and Osceola. Both design work by Stan Fishman and market research by David Lanegran recommend these areas as places to concentrate commercial activity.

The market will not support new large scale retail construction at this time. But the concentration of existing and new businesses into nodes at major intersections would be both convenient for the pedestrian shopper and profitable for businesses. Any housing developed along West Seventh in areas vacated by businesses relocating into nodes would increase the population of the local market.

Design

A major element of commercial improvement will be to maintain the existing structures. The Fort Road Design Study recommends respecting the existing style of building and also standardization of such things as colors, awnings, signage, setback and facade proportion.

In the area of public improvements, the design study recommends that street lighting be representative of the historical period of the buildings. Trees should not be planted in front of commercial buildings, but used in voids and in front of residences.

The tourism study also emphasizes the need for continuity along the street. History, including ethnicity, historic structures and historic figures, should be highlighted in a theme for the whole West Seventh strip.

The triangular blocks along West Seventh are a unique challenge and opportunity to be developed consistently with the theme. Good design is good business, and a unified design concept for the development of the commercial nodes can help build a positive image of West Seventh.

Develop a viable business community, having a positive image, serving the needs of the local market as well as capturing a larger city or regional market.

Recommendations

1. *The LDC should continue to provide loans for building repair and expansion, concentrating on the two major emphasis areas.*

2. *City financial support of the LDC loan program should continue.*

3. *The LDC should develop programs to promote better relations between merchants and community, such as: (a) fine-tuning of merchandising to meet the needs of the local market; and (b) promotion of community spirit and consumer identification with the local merchant market.*

4. *Businesses should concentrate on appealing to presently poorly tapped secondary markets, such as the Historic Hill, Macalester-Groveland, Highland Park, suburban dwellers, the downtown labor force and tourists.*

5. *Businesses should compete in goods and services not stressed by West Seventh's two main competitors, Grand Avenue and Highland Village shopping center.*

6. *There should be an education program for business operators to understand their relation to the street and the market, and how they can support each other.*

7. *The West Seventh Federation should develop a program to improve security and the image of security on the street.*

8. *Commercial development should improve and use existing structures on the street.*

9. *Develop a plan to reconstruct neighborhood shopping facilities, expand parking for existing and possible new establishments in the area of the intersection of Randolph and West Seventh.*

10. *Help entrepreneurs to develop a theme shopping area oriented toward a regional market and 18 hour day between the Civic Center and St. Clair on West Seventh.*

11. *Compliance with the Fort Road Design Study guidelines should be strongly encouraged whenever changes are made on an old building or a new one is built.*

12. *Merchants should stress the theme of the historic Fort Road, Gateway to St. Paul, and use the name Fort Road instead of West Seventh.*

13. *The Federation and businessmen should develop a clean-up campaign on West Seventh Street.*

14. *Public improvements should be made along the guidelines of the Fort Road Design Study to complement improvements by entrepreneurs in the two target areas.*



15. *West Seventh Federation, City Planning or a private consultant, should do a study of the triangular blocks to determine acquisition and rehabilitation costs, and the possibility of sod, trees, bus shelters, and parking.*

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES FOR WEST SEVENTH RESIDENTS

The majority of the people who have used the existing employment program have been low income, and often have faced one or more barriers to employment. Lack of training, poor work histories, and unclear vocational goals have been the most common barriers found, and are not easily eliminated.

Some of the key services needed to eliminate barriers to employment include career and vocational counseling, easy access to a variety of educational and training programs, on the job training, and job placement services. Currently, the West Seventh resources meeting these needs are:

- a. The Ramsey Action Program employment program (with one staff person).
- b. The St. Paul Rehabilitation Center which provides training and placement for St. Paul handicapped individuals.
- c. Oneida Education Center, which has a GED program, college classes and adult basic skills.
- d. Salvation Army--day labor program.

There are also other metro area resources outside the community available to residents which offer comprehensive employment services. West Seventh uses these resources more heavily than most other districts.

The existing resources do not adequately meet the needs of the community. There is currently only one West Seventh staff person available in employment to provide people with services and referral to other programs. The one staff person at the Neighborhood Center who had also worked in employment is phasing out due to the ending of funding for his position.

West Seventh Businesses As A Source for Employment

Currently, there is no formal coordination between businessmen and the employment program. An on the job training and job referral program could be set up so people can work in their own community. This type of program is especially important in conjunction with the business revitalization program underway. It would help insure that money brought into the area by increased business activity would benefit residents directly by means of

increased local job opportunities. Business revenues are then recycled into residential purchasing power.

Goal

Strengthen neighborhood employment program.

Recommendations

1. Obtain Department of Employment Services job bank and staff person.
2. Seek one additional staff person for community center employment program if DES staff is not feasible.
3. Develop formal coordination with West Seventh businesses for on the job training and job placement.
4. Additional public service job programs oriented around marketable skill development.
5. Vocational training program(s) such as clerical skills.
6. Work with metro area employment resources (DES, CETA, WIN, DVR, etc.) to make their services more accessible and appropriate to West Seventh residents. Maintain and strengthen formal ties with Career Guidance and Training Center (CETA).
7. Ensure close coordination between all staff in different agencies working in employment area.

INDUSTRY

West Seventh is close to several of the city's major industrial areas, and contains 13% of the city's total industrial acreage. Many of these areas are occupied by high space/low employee industries.



Employment

Industries such as the oil tank fields, Kaplans, NSP, and the barrel factories offer few actual jobs for West Seventh residents. These industries are expected to last for some time to come. Labor intensive companies are needed to increase job opportunities.

Goal

To use industrial land with priorities given to increased job opportunities for city residents.

Recommendations

1. *The city and community should encourage labor intensive industries to locate in West Seventh industrial land.*
2. *Should existing low labor industries leave, they should only be replaced by labor intensive industries.*
3. *Public land should not be sold to uses which do not provide reasonable increases in the St. Paul employment market.*

Making Industrial Areas Attractive

The location of poorly designed industry has done a lot to depress the neighborhood values. Several techniques for buffering conflicting uses are outlined in the city's Land Use Plan.

Goal

To improve the aesthetics of existing industrial areas where they contact residential neighborhoods.

Recommendations

1. *The city plant trees along Otto, West Seventh and Hathaway around the Shell and Mobil oil tanks.*
2. *The West Seventh community work with the oil companies to landscape their properties with hedges and shrubs to eliminate the views into unsodded areas.*
3. *The city should plant trees along Cliff Street to soften the very harsh atmosphere of the concrete, steel barriers and chain link fence.*

4. *Industrial structures built in the river valley should not rise higher than the cliff where residential areas begin. New construction should not block views from residential areas to sites across the river valley or into the valley from the edge of the cliff.*

5. *Riverside industries should be encouraged to plant trees within the interior of their areas to soften its looks from the bluffs above.*

Steam Plant

A steam plant task force has been formed in West Seventh and is researching the question of a steam plant and its effects on the West Seventh neighborhoods facing the river. The task force would oppose the plant now because very little information is available about it and how it will function. Site plans and evaluation presented at West Seventh meetings have failed to depict the plant at an accurate scale to determine how high it was or its bulk. Major disagreements will center on potential height, smells, smoke, traffic on Shepard, West Seventh, Randolph and Chestnut Streets, noise generated by the plant, and blocking views from West Seventh to the river.

Another area of concern is the best use of industrial land in the city. The steam plant is a large user of land with little return in employment opportunities. Its energy resource after sale to NSP will not necessarily show up as better energy prices for St. Paul over other localities served by NSP.

Recommendations

1. *Any new construction along the river at the Kaplan site should not rise above the bluffs.*
2. *The city should concentrate on securing labor intensive industry for this site or industry that requires a location close to the river. Recommendations in the Parks Section suggest park land for part of this site.*
3. *The steam plant should not be built at this location, unless adequate information is secured to show no adverse effects will be created for residential areas of West Seventh overlooking this site.*